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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Project: **IR-96**

OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

Project Initiation Memorandum

Date: **3 April 1950**

D/T

From: Publications Division, Projects Planning

Subject: **Chinese Railroads**

Statement of Project:

Origin: Internal (K-840, memo of 28 March)

Object: To provide specified information on railroads of China

Summary: The information requested is detailed in the attached memorandum subject to revisions contained in requester's memorandum of 29 March 1950. Geographical scope includes China and Manchuria.

Graphics (if any): None required

Form: Memorandum (orig. & 2)

Draft due in D/T: 7 April 1950

Responsible Division: D/T

Dissemination deadline
(if any)

7 April 1950

Internal Coordination: D/T

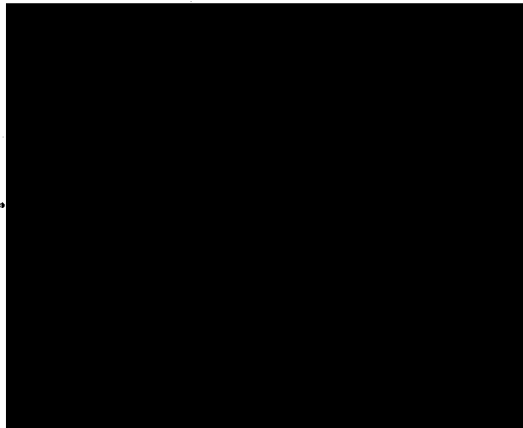
Departmental Responsibilities: None

Classification to be no higher than: **Secret**

Recommended Dissemination: Requester only

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copy to D/Tr
AD/FE
file 25X1A

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Project: P-96

OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

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Departmental Responsibilities: None

Classification to be no higher than: Secret

Recommended Dissemination: Requester only

1. Railroads - China
2. China - Tran

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28 March 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/Pub, ORE

ATTENTION : Mr. [REDACTED] 25X1A

SUBJECT : Request for Information on Chinese Railroads

REFERENCE : Our Case #K-840

1. It is requested that this office be furnished the following information concerning the railroads of China, including Manchuria:

a. The present condition of the main lines and an indication as to which ones are currently in operation.

b. The approximate number of operable engines with type of power indicated.

c. The approximate number of operable passenger cars, freight cars and other types.

d. Present condition of main bridges.

e. Present condition of main railroad repair shops.

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25X1A 2. Mr. [REDACTED] of this office has discussed this request with Mr. [REDACTED] of Transportation Division.

3. It is requested that this information be furnished by 15 April 1950.

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[REDACTED]
Acting Chief, Intelligence Support

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations (see separate sheet) should be used in the "To" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "To" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Record and Routing Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM:

ISB

28 March 1950

ACCESSION NO.

C-21248

DATE RECEIVED IN S. A.

29 Mar.

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. D/Pub, ORT MR. [REDACTED]	25X1A				
2.					
3.					
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5.					
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29 March 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/Pub, ORE
ATTENTION : Mr. [REDACTED] 25X1A
SUBJECT : Request for Information on Chinese Railroads
REFERENCE : Our Memorandum, Same Subject, Dated 28 March 1950

25X1A

This is to confirm my conversation with Mr. [REDACTED] of Transportation Division amending reference memorandum to exclude paragraphs 1c, d, and e and to establish a deadline of 7 April 1950.

25X1A

[REDACTED]
Acting Chief, Intelligence Support

REFERENCE: Case #K-840

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FROM:

ISB

29 March 1950

ACCESSION NO.

C-21223

DATE RECEIVED IN S. A.

29 Mar.

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. Pub. ORR Mr. [REDACTED]	25X1A				
2.					
3.					
4.					
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6.					
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Mr. [REDACTED] Publications Division, ORE

14 April 1950

Chief, Transportation Division, ORE

Request for Information on Chinese Railroads, Case #K-340

I. Lines Currently in Operation and their Present Condition -

Information on lines currently in operation is generally adequate and appears to be reliable. It is based mainly on broadcasts from Communist China, Hong Kong newspaper items, and reports of Communist plans for rehabilitation of the railroad network. For a few lines, confirmation is available from Americans who traveled over them recently. Information is inadequate on the status of secondary and branch lines in Manchuria. The condition of lines is jointly estimated by D/FE and D/Tr, and is of moderate reliability. It is based on observations of American travelers, on the amount of destruction in the last 13 years of wars, and on a knowledge of which lines are considered by the Communists to be of major importance.

China has about 26,500 kilometers of lines (excluding Taiwan and Hainan) which are, or have been, in operation. The Chinese Communists reported early in 1950 that 21,000 kilometers of line had been restored to operation.

A. Manchuria

There were more than 12,000 kilometers of line in Manchuria in 1944, of which the Chinese Communists restored almost 10,000 kilometers by early 1950. The only line of any importance which is not in operation is the Manchurian section of the Peiping-Jehol line, the inland alternate railroad connecting Peiping and Manchuria. About 1,700 kilometers of line which had been built in the northern and eastern frontier zone by the Japanese for strategic purposes were dismantled either by the retreating Japanese in early 1945 or by the Soviets shortly thereafter. These lines probably will not be reconstructed.

Manchurian railroads are in relatively better condition than are lines in China Proper, because they were more sturdily built originally, the period during which they went without maintenance was generally shorter, and they were not as severely damaged by wars. These lines are probably operating at safe, if not normal, standards. The second track which at one time existed on much of the two most important roads (the Peiping-Liaoning and Chinese Changchun) has been removed. Replacement of these double tracks, and the reconstruction of the Manchurian segment of the Peiping-Jehol line, are included in the railroad reconstruction plan for 1950. The most recent reports on the Manchouli-Suifenho line state that it is wide gauge; however, the reliability of

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these reports is doubted because there is no indication of the transshipment of freight at points where this line crosses standard gauge lines, and there is no evidence that Russian locomotives and rolling stock are in use on this line. In addition, reports of through service between this and certain standard gauge lines indicate that there is no difference in gauge.

B. China Proper

China Proper has a total of 14,500 kilometers of railroad operating or inoperable: 8,500 kilometers in North China and 6,000 kilometers in South China. The Communists were operating about 11,000 kilometers of line in early 1950. Most of the 3,500 kilometers of unrestored railroad are branch and connecting lines except the following four sections of main lines: Tatung-Hsinhsien (Tatung-Puchow line), Paochi-Tienshui (Lunghai line), Pishihchai-Hokou (Kunnan-Indo China line) and Nantan-Tuyun (Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow line).

Probably the only lines operating nearly at normal standards are the Shanghai-Nanking, Tientsin-Pukow and Peiping-Liaoning lines, all of which are partly double-tracked. The rail connection between Shanghai and Canton may be in good condition, although the Nationalists are reported to have damaged it in their 1949 retreat. The remaining lines appear to be in poor condition, judging from the haste with which the Communists rebuilt almost total destroyed lines, and the inadequacy of materials and repair facilities available to them. Of the major lines, the Lunghai and the Peiping-Hankow are probably in the worst condition. Serious deficiencies of all or most of the lines include temporary bridges, and the shortage of spurs, sidings, and by-passes. The length of this supplementary trackage was never adequate in proportion to the length of main lines (North China had about one mile of supplementary trackage to four or five miles of main line) and it was extensively cannibalized by the Communists to reconstruct the main lines.

Comments on Condition of Railroads South of the Great Wall

<u>Line</u>	<u>Date first operated by Communists</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Peiping-Shanhaikwan	Jan-March 1949	Good. Peiping-Tientsin double-tracked. Bridges good except possibly weak Luan R. bridge. Trains fast.
Peiping-Hankow	December 1949	Poor to Fair! Many sections had been totally destroyed. Some Soviet rails, Soviet advice, used to repair this. Capacity low and service irregular.

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Peiping-Suiyuan	October 1949	Fair. One press item in Mar. '50 complains of corruption and inefficiency in operation of this line,
Taiyuan-Tehsien	Jan.-Mar. 1949	Fair. Little information.
Tatung-Puchow (Section from Hsinhsien to Fenglingtu)	December 1949	Poor. Little info. Branch from Hsinhsien to Wutar rebuilt as far as Tinghsiang. Rebuilt to meter gauge south of Taiyuan.
Tainan-Tsingtao	July 1949	Fair. Capacity inadequate to carry Tsingtao imports to Tientsin-Pukou line. Roadbed poor.
Tientsin-Pukou	June 1949	Good. Some temporary bridges will likely incapacitate line during summer floods. Communist efforts to increase capacity include partial double tracking.
Huainan (Pengpu-Yuchichen)	September 1949	Poor to fair. South part described by travellers as "temporary roadbed". Important for bringing out Huainan coal.
Lunghai (Paochi to the coast)	December 1949	Poor. Although reported open, western sections have light rails, temporary bridges. 1950 plan includes improving Tungkuan-Paochi segment and restoration of the Paochi-Tienshui segment.
Chekiang-Kiangsi	December 1949	Fair. Rebuilt by Nats in Aug. 1948, who destroyed some bridges in 1949 retreat. Not built for heavy traffic.
Canton-Hankow	December 1949	Fair. Completely rebuilt after 1945. Not built for heavy traffic. Commies report Soviet aid on bridges.
Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow (Hengyang to Liuchow)	January 1950	Poor to fair. Never sturdy; doubtful if has more than minimum standards. Passable from Liuchow to Nantan.

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Canton-Kowloon

October 1949

Fair. Well-built but poorly maintained. Through service consisted of only one train which ran in March 1950. Otherwise, goods and passengers must transfer at border of New Territory.

II. Locomotives and Rolling Stock

A. Locomotives

There are no recent reliable statistics available on the number of locomotives in China. It is estimated that there are about 2,500 locomotives in all of China. These locomotives are probably evenly divided between Manchuria and China Proper. All locomotives in China are steam-powered and coal-fired.¹ While no tabulation of locomotive types in China is available, the most common types of locomotives are:

2-8-2 Mikado freight locomotive
4-6-2 Pacific passenger locomotive

There are also smaller numbers of locomotives of the following types:

2-6-0 Mogul
2-6-2 Prairie
2-8-0 Consolidation
4-8-2 Mountain

In addition, Manchuria also has the 2-10-0 Decapod and 2-10-2 Santa Fe, and the Peiping-Suiyuan has a few 2-8-3-2 Mallet locomotives.

B. Rolling Stock

There are about 3,000 passenger cars and somewhat over 30,000 freight cars in operation in all of China at present. This estimate is derived from calculations based on Communist inventories, and known rolling stock in 1945. The quantity of operable rolling stock is now roughly the same as in 1937, although this is about half the wartime peak.

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¹The Japanese operated a few diesel locomotives in Manchuria; but since there are no postwar reports on them, it is doubtful if they are in operation.

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